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Inventory for
Manuscript Collection
MS-367

Captain William Emery Frost Papers

Inclusive dates: 1877-1889
Bulk dates: 1881-1885

by
Tracy Lamaestra (edited by Anastasia Weigle)
September 2012

Shelf feet: .5 linear feet
Number of boxes: 2
Accession nos. 2003.072.192.1-5, 2004.066.402

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Abstract

Frost, William Emery, (b. 1848 - d. 1928), *Captain*

Papers, 1877-1889 (Bulk dates: 1881-1885)

2 Manuscript size boxes, (.5 Shelf feet)

Ship captain from Topsham, Maine.

Vessel related papers and personal papers of Captain William Emery Frost. Vessel papers for the *Martha P. Tucker* (Bark), *Midas* (Bark) and *Pleiades* (Ship) includes correspondence, account summaries, general accounts, charter parties, freight lists, crew wages, slops and a protest. Other related maritime paper are a master's license certification and various maritime circulars. Personal papers consists family related letters or personal business. Series I. Vessel related papers and Series II. Personal papers.

Gift of Charles Burden, 2003, 2004.

MS-367. Accession Nos. 2003.072.192.1-5, 2004.066.402.

Related material available at repository, MS-79.

Finding aid available in repository; folder-level control.

Added entries—persons:

Bradstreet, P. G.

Frost, William Emery, *Captain*

Patten, Lincoln, *Captain*

Tucker, George W., Jr., *Captain*

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

Martha P. Tucker (Bark)

Midas (Bark)

Osmond O'Brien (Bark)

Pleiades (Ship)

Providenza R. (Bark)

Added entries—key terms:

Accounts

Charter-parties

Freight and freightage

Guano industry

Insurance, Marine--Adjustment of claims

Letters

Lumber trade

Marine protests

Seafaring

Ship captains

Shipping

Voyages and travels

Wages

Acquisition

The Captain William Emery Frost papers were a gift to the Maine Maritime Museum from Charles Burden on December 30, 2003 and December 17, 2004, accession nos. 2003.072.192.1-5, 2004.066.402.

Provenance

It is unknown at this time where the donor acquired the Captain William Emery Frost papers other than they came in with additional objects, books photographs, ephemera, periodicals and other maritime materials to the museum in 2003 and 2004.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on the use of these materials for study or research.

Physical Condition

The papers were loosely organized in an one archival box. Many of the papers are stained, discolored or acidic. Others have creases with minor tears and missing pieces. Most of these were repaired with thin, transparent document repair tape. Documents with creases and folds were gently flattened with a tacking iron at low to medium heat. One charter party is tied with ribbons and sealed with wax stamp (box 1/folder 19). Many of the records are fragile and should be handled with care.

Processing Notes

The collection is primarily vessel related papers including a few maritime publications circulars and some personal papers. In the ship *Pleiades* papers, there are correspondence to and from Capt. Frost as well as letters written between other individuals. I separated these letters from the Captain's letters.

Vessel papers are organized alphabetically by name and then chronologically by creation date. Vessel papers follow a standardized sequence to simplify access. The *Midas* (Bark) and *Pleiades* (Ship) voyages were broken down via invoices and separated by dividers. These voyages depict ports, dates and some date ranges.

Certain consul or clearance documents were placed in general accounts as they exhibit voyages. A number of accounts general papers were bundled together by voyage. These bundled papers were kept together and then organized by creation date. Papers bundled by the creator were kept together. There is a copy of a protest for damages to vessel caused by extreme weather with numerous letters relating to this incident. These letters are group into three folders: incoming (to Capt. Wm. E. Frost), outgoing (from Capt. Wm. E. Frost) and other. Theses folders are placed under "Protests."

Biographical Notes

Captain William Emery Frost was born on February 6, 1848 in Topsham, Maine to Obediah Emery Frost (b. 1807-d. 1849) and Jane P. Hunter (b. 1825). He married Augusta Chase Swift (b. 1848-d. 1938), daughter of John L. Swift, in Brunswick, Maine in 1877. They had children: Alton Swift (b. 1879-d. 1941) and John William (b. 1885).[1] Capt. Frost resided in Topsham all of his life

At about seventeen years of age he went to sea as a sailor and became shipmaster as the early age of 26. He commanded the *Midas* (Bark) and the *Pleiades* (Ship), sailing all over the world.[2]

According to research notes found with the collection (possibly written by the donor), Captain Frost's voyages were chronicled as follows. He was on the ship *Ella Norton* as a "Boy" in 1865 with Captain Norton as master. He voyaged on the *Kate Davenpor*t (Ship) in 1867-1868 as a sailor and then third mate with Captain Henry Otis. In 1869, he was on the ship *Sabino* as a second mate with Captain Paine. He was on this same vessel in April 1871 and then as first mate in 1871-1872. As a chief mate on the ship *Ellen Good Speed*, he traveled with Captain "Bill" Otis from 1874-1875 and then with Captain Preble in 1876 on the same vessel.[3]

From 1877 to 1879, he was master of the bark *Midas*. The *Midas* (Bark) voyaged from New York to Trieste, Austria with oil in barrels; Trietse to Catania, Sicily with lumber; and Catania to New York with sulphur, 1877. In September 1877, the bark *Midas* traveled from New York to Valparaiso, Chile with general cargo and powder. His wife voyaged with him at this time. From Valparaiso they went to Iquique, Chile. The bark *Midas* went from Iquique to Pabello de Pica for guano in 1878. Captain Frost left Pabello de Pica and voyaged to Queenstown, Ireland for orders then from Queenstown to Ostend, Belgium for guano. After Ostend, he went to Antwerp for a load of cargo. Mrs. Frost went home via a steamer from Antwerp to Boston. He took a general cargo from Antwerp to Imbitiba, Brazil.[3] The vessel wrecked in October 1878 on the voyage to Imbituba.[4] In 1879, the *Midas* (Bark) voyaged from Imbitiba to Rio de Janeiro for repairs. After this, the vessel went to Boston where Captain Frost left the bark for home.[3]

Captain Frost was shipmaster of the *Pleiades* (Ship) in November 1881 in which he owned one eighth of the ship (box 2/folder3). According to the donor's research, who chronicled Captain Frost's voyages, the vessel went from Portland to Montevideo, Uruguay with lumber and logs. In April 1882, the ship voyaged from Montevideo to Valparaiso, Chile with ballast then to Victoria, B. C. with ballast. In 1882, the *Pleiades* (Ship) went from Victoria B. C. to Tacoma, Washington and then Tacoma to Valparaiso, Chile with lumber. The ship *Pleiades* took lumber from Valparaiso to Antofagasta, Chile in January 1883. The vessel voyaged from Antofagasta to Lota, Chile with copper and ore and then from Lota to Callao, Peru with coal.[3]

Captain Frost was to take nitrate and other cargo on the *Pleiades* (Ship) from Callao to Europe (Queenstown, Cowes or Falmouth) in 1883. The nitrate was originally the cargo of the *Providenza R.* (Bark). The bark *Providenza R.* met with disaster at sea with this nitrate and was forced to return to Callao where it was condemned. Captain Frost contracted with the Captain (Capt. P. Aste?) of the *Providenza R.* (Bark) to carry this nitrate to its original destination. He signed a bill of lading with the *Providenza R* (Ship) on October 23, 1883. The ship the *Pleiades* was detained at Callao for twenty-nine days due to a dispute between the shipper of the nitrate and the master of *Providenza R.* (Bark). Captain Frost incurred a bill of demurrage for his ship

when delayed by this dispute. The *Pleiades* (Ship) took on additional cargo (bones, animal charcoal, old metal) as the vessel was not full enough with the nitrate. The vessel eventually set sail on November 24, 1883. A bad leak and sprung foremast occurred due to severe weather on the high seas after Captain Frost left Callao on the *Pleiades* (Ship). He sailed the distressed vessel to Valparaiso where the ship was determined irreparable. The *Pleiades* (Ship) was condemned after a number of surveys and then sold at public auction on March 30, 1884. Captain Frost chartered the *Osmond O'Brien* (Bark) to carry out the contract with the master of the *Providenza R.* (Bark). The entire cargo of the *Pleiade*s (Ship) was then transferred to the *Osmond O'Brien* (Bark), which sailed from Valparaiso on April 1, 1884 for Falmouth (box 2/folder 1). Captain Frost went home via a steamer by way of San Francisco. Oftentimes, his wife and son Alton accompanied him on the ship *Pleiades* voyages.[3]

After Capt. Frost retired, he became a railroad agent in Topsham. Moreover, he was a clerk and trustee of the First Congregational Church of Topsham for forty years.[2] He died on May 3, 1928 and was buried at Riverview Cemetery in Topsham. His wife died in 1938 and was buried in the same cemetery as well.[1]

His son Alton lived in Merrimac, MA and John W. became an attorney of New York City and Mayor of Pleasantville, NY where he also resided. In memory of their mother, Alton and John were donors of the Frost Trust Fund of the Topsham Public.[2]

Captain Lincoln Patten

Captain Lincoln Patten was born on December 12, 1808 to Captain David Patten (b. 1769-d. 1830) and Hannah Reed (d. 1828). He married Mary Storer on November 30, 1840. They had children Edward Lincoln (b. 1846-d. 1864) and David Clement (b. 1847- d. 1865). Captain Patten married, second wife, Mary Elizabeth Whitney (d. 1866) on June 30, 1851. They had children Frank Whitney (b. 1855-d. 1913) and Mary Storer (b. 1862-d. 1885). Captain Patten married, third wife, Maria Roger Tabox (d. 1900) in Brunswick on October 10, 1872.[7]

Captain Patten was a descendent from Actor Patten. The Patten's were a famous shipbuilding family of Bath. Captain Patten was master of David Patten's (brother) ship the *Tempest* in 1849. He was also captain of the *Roswell Sprague* (Ship) and *India* (Ship).[5] Captain Lincoln Patten was a ship agent for the bark *Midas* in 1877-1878 (box 1/folder 3). He died on November 23, 1900 at 92 years old.[1]

References cited:

1. http://www.ancestry.com
2. "Frost Family Closely Linked with History of Topsham: Recent Bequests to Town's Library Revive Interest in the Distinguished and Varied Service Rendered by Members of the Family." *Brunswick Record.* 2 October 1939.
3. "Captain William E. Frost, Topsham, Maine: Record of Voyages."
4. "Disaster." *Bath Daily Times.* 23 October 1878.
5. MS-54. Box 12. Series I.A. Biography and Family Genealogy. Patten.

Scope and Content

This is a collection of vessel related and and personal papers of Captain William Emery Frost pertain to the *Martha P. Tucker* (Bark), *Midas* (Bark) and the *Pleiades* (Ship). This

includes correspondence, account summaries, accounts general, charter parties, freight lists, crew wages, slop accounts and correspondences relating to an incident. Captain Frost corresponds with ship brokers, ship agents, ship merchants, underwriters and attorneys about cargo, repairs, voyages, bills, expenses, market fluctuations, wrecks, claims, insurance policies and charter parties among other maritime subjects.

There are only two letters relating to the bark, *Martha P. Tucker*. These are both incoming to Capt. Frost from Capt. George W. Tucker, Jr., who may have been managing owner (box 1/folder 1).

Incoming correspondence for the bark *Midas* are separated into three groups. General incoming, Capt. Lincoln Patten (ship agent) and P. G. Bradstreet, who also wrote on behalf of Capt. Patten. Some note of interest is a letter from Mate Richard Pike of the bark *Midas* who writes to Captain Frost on October 1, 1878 about problems loading cargo (box 1/folder 2). In another letter dated November 1, 1878, Bridge, Lord and Co., ship brokers, write to Captain Frost (who was in Imbeitiba, Brazil) regarding damages to the bark Midas and whether or not to repair (box 1/folder 2). In accounts, general there is a document stating that seaman Charles Happe, alias Frank Happe ,died in Rio de Janiero. He joined the vessel at Antwerp on July 28, 1878 and then died at Rio on December 23, 1878 (box 1/folder 6).

Protests papers have extensive correspondence regarding the ship *Pleiades*. Protest correspondence is between Captain Frost and adjusters, underwriters, ship agents, ship brokers and attorneys. The claims of Captain Frost are disputed at great length with much conflict in these letters. Adjusters Winship Bros. & Gore attached a clause to their legal document on page three regarding freight policies concerning the protest (box 2/folder 1). An accounts general receipt dated June 30, 1883 documents the desertion of three seamen from the ship *Pleiades* at Lota, Chile (box 1/folder 17).

Personal papers include correspondence. Manfred M. Riggs details the illness, death and funeral of Frost's mother (Jane P. Frost) in a letter to Captain Frost at Valparaiso, Chile on January 20, 1883 (folder 20). Manfred Riggs worked at C. S. Clark Manufacturers at 270 Commercial Street in Portland as an importer and dealer in lumber (box 1/folder 6, letter Nov. 7, 1880). Riggs was married to Ann Octavia Frost the sister of Capt. Frost. She was addressed as "Octavia" in letters. A letter from Lizzie F. (Sarah E. Elizabeth Frost) to Gustie (Augusta Chase Frost) on April 4, 1877 shows they had a close relationship (box1/folder 6). Sarah E. Elizabeth (b. 1846-d. 1925) was the sister to Capt. Wm. E. Frost. She was addressed in many letters as "Sa Liz" or "Sa Lizzie." She remained single and lived with Captain Frost and Augusta in Topsham, Maine from 1900 to 1920.

MS-367 Capt. William E. Frost Papers
Organization and Description of Series

Series I. Vessel papers (n.d., 1877-1888):

Subseries IA. Vessel Papers: *Papers for the Martha P. Tucker* (Bark), *Midas* (Bark) and *Pleiades* (Ship) includes letters, account summaries, general accounts, charter parties, freight lists, crew wages, slops and protest letters.

Subseries IB. Other Maritime related papers (n.d., 1888-89): One master certificate, Puget Sound Towage rate circular, and two Treasury Department circulars.

Series II. Personal papers (1870-1885): Four letters from friend Manfred Riggs, one letter to Augusta Chase Frost and one letter to F. F. Adams & Co regarding personal business with Capt. Frost.

MS-367 Captain William Emery Frost Papers
Container List

SERIES I. VESSEL RELATED PAPERS

Box#	Folder#	
		Subseries IA. Vessel Papers
		***Martha P. Tucker* (Bark)**
1	1	Correspondence, incoming, Capt. George W. Tucker, Jr., 1877
		***Midas* (Bark)**
	2	Correspondence, general, n.d., 1878-79
	3	Capt. Lincoln Patten, ship agent, 1877-78
	4	P. G. Bradstreet, 1877-79
	5	Outgoing, 1878-80
		Accounts, general
	6	Imbetiba (BRA) Sept-Dec. 1878 & Rio de Janiero, Jan. 1879
		***Pleiades* (Ship)**
	7	Correspondence, incoming, 1881-1882
	8	Incoming, 1883-85
	9	Outgoing, 1883-85 & letters other than to or from Capt. Frost, 1882
		Accounts, general,
	10	Montevideo (URU), Oct.-Dec. 1881
	11	Montevideo (URU), Jan.-Feb. 1882
	12	Valparaiso (CHI), April l1882
	13	Victoria & Esquimalt (BC) / Port Townsend (WA), June- July 1882
	14	Arroyo Seco (CA), Oct. 1882

	15	Valparaiso (CHI), Nov.-Dec. 1882, Jan.1883
	16	Antofagasta (CHI), Feb.-Apr. 1883
	17	Lota (CHI), May-June 1883
	18	Callao & Lima (PER), Sept-Nov. 1883
	19	Accounts, charter parties, 1881-1882
	20	Freight lists, 1881-1882
	21	Crew wages, 1882-1884
	22	Slops, 1883
	23	Misc. receipts, 1884
2	1	Copy of Protest, May 1884 (weather damage)
	2	Correspondence, Capt. Frost, incoming, 1883-1888
	3	Correspondence, Capt. Frost, outgoing, 1884-1885
	4	Other correspondence, 1884-1885

Subseries IB Other Maritime related papers

	5	Certificate, Master License for steam vessels, 1889
	6	Puget Sound Towage Rates, n.d. and Treasury Dept. Circulars, 1888

SERIES II. PERSONAL PAPERS

	7	Correspondence, 1877, 1881, 1883, 1885